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Human Rights Developments

Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, editor of Nicaragua's large daily newspaper La Prensa and longtime opponent of the government, was shot and killed on 10 January. Neither the identity of the assassins nor the motive has yet been determined. It is unlikely that President Somoza, who has borne Chamorro's sharp criticism for over a decade, would be a party--either directly or indirectly--to such a politically counterproductive act. It would be not only at variance with his past method of handling opposition, but would run counter to his present strategy of dialogue with opponents and his effort to improve the country's human rights image.

Flavio Tavares, an exiled Brazilian journalist who had been under arrest in Uruguay since July on espionage charges, was released from prison on 6 January. Official Brazilian interest and President Giscard's impending visit apparently were responsible for the early resolution of the case. Tavares now probably will be expelled from Uruguay and sent home.

19 Christian Tra e Unionists and rural activists were arrested and confined on 17 December. The union has appealed to President Stroessner for the detainees' release on the basis of the principles of human rights and labor freedom. [redacted] the union has raised its voice in opposition to the President on this issue and that other Paraguayans are mounting a campaign to free the detainees.

Despite President Pinochet's plebiscite victory,

Chile will continue to work with the Allianza UN human rights group. If the Alliana group agrees to the "rules of the game" for "on site" visits, the group may be allowed to visit Santiago. Meanwhile, the Chilean Supreme Court upheld a lower court's refusal to accept habeas corpus petitions on behalf of three women denied

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reentry to Chile in November. The women had sought international assistance to force the Chilean Government to release information on the fate of missing person*. The three [redacted] are going to make another attempt to return to Chile next week.

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Haitian President Jean-Claude Duvalier in a speech last week stressed order and gradualism as the country moves toward liberalization and democratization. Duvalier said that Haiti has no lessons to learn from anyone in the realm of human rights and that it insists on noninterference in the domestic affairs of other nations. The speech was disappointing for many Haitians who expected greater reassurances of the President's commitment to liberalization. Progress will be continued, but on much more conservative terms. [redacted]

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